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Housekeepers' Chats

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Spring Styles for Young Heads". Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

Bulletin available: Mimeographed material on Playtime Hats for Little Children.

If you are interested in practical play hats for children this season, I think I can tell you something about them, for I have just made a call on a friend of mine whose specialty is correct clothing for the young members of the family. Her name is Miss Clarice Scott and she spends her days designing all kinds of comfortable and becoming children's garments that mothers who do their own sewing can make.

Mothers are lucky people these days. In our grandmothers' time there were no Miss Scotts to advise about warm comfortable play suits, and convenient and attractive dresses for little girls and suits for small boys. And there was no Bureau of Home Economics with a trained staff to work out clothing problems and issue helpful leaflets. In those days the home dressmaker just had to get along as best she could. If the baby's sleeves were so long that he didn't learn to creep as early as he should; if Sally's winter coat was so heavy that it tired her to walk to school; and if Peter's suits were so tight that he didn't enjoy playing with the other boys, there were no experts to give helpful suggestions and remedy such faults in the next garments made.

Today things are quite different. A visit to Miss Scott is enough to make me almost wish that I could change places with the famous old woman who lived in a shoe. How I should love to dress all her children up in these delightful new clothes, so attractive to look at, so simple to make, so handy for children who are learning to dress themselves, and so comfortable for small active bodies.

The latest additions to the smart child's wardrobe, which Miss Scott showed me, are two kinds of headwear, suitable either for boys or girls. One is a rain hat and the other is a beret (pronounced bear-ray). A child outfitted with these will not be bothered either by March winds or April showers. Just half a yard of material makes each of these caps and Miss Scott has prepared a mimeographed set of directions with diagrams and illustrations that any home dressmaker can follow.

The beret is a type of cap adopted from our French neighbors across the sea. Children, little and big, in France began the style of wearing

these comfortable; becoming little caps and recently we Americans have discovered just how nice they are! They look something like small tam o'shanter. Comfortable, light yet warm and easy to pull on, they stick firmly to the head when one is running or jumping rope, or even when a stiff wind is blowing, yet they do not bind or feel tight on the head. Cotton suede or any soft woolen fabric that can be shrunk to the right size and shape may be used. Of course, to make a good-looking outfit a color should be chosen for the beret that will match or harmonize with the child's coat or playsuit. Very likely you have an old coat or dress put away somewhere that will be just the thing to use. If new material is purchased, a half yard of woolen fabric and half a yard of lining is sufficient.

When spring rains begin to come down in torrents, what shall the small child wear to keep the drops from slipping down the back of his neck under his collar and from spattering straight in his eyes? Large rubber or oilcloth hats are so often-stiff and unwieldy. The old New England fishermen devised a kind of waterproof hat long ago known as a sou'wester, which had a short brim in front to keep the rain off the face, and a long sloping brim in back to protect that gap at the collar-line. The new rain hat designed for children resembles this serviceable style, but is softer and more suitable for active youngsters. It can be made of any water repellent cloth. The brim, which is stiffened simply by several rows of stitching, may be either rolled back or left turned down in front. The long back is made to shed water. If you have an old rain-coat of some cravenetted material like twill around the house, it will be excellent for converting into one of these trim and sturdy rainy-day hats.

The great advantage of both these new models is that they suit their purpose admirably, and are most inexpensive, whether made from new material or old garments. The clothing specialists, just like all the rest of us these days, are thinking of economy and ways to help mothers clothe themselves and their families on a limited budget.

Did I hear somebody say that she wanted an inexpensive menu suitable for children, featuring hamburger steak and onions on rings? How very fortunate, for we have exactly that kind of a menu to give you today. I'll read it first and then we'll talk about it.

Broiled Hamburg steak on onion rings; Creamed mixed vegetables; Shredded lettuce salad; and, for dessert, Chocolate cornstarch pudding with cream or top milk.

Hamburg steak, as most housekeepers know, is made simply by grinding up the less tender lean cuts of meat. You can buy pieces of any of these inexpensive cuts and grind the meat yourself in your own meat chopper, or you can pick them out and ask your butcher to chop them for you while you wait.

You will find the recipe for Hamburg steak on onion rings in your leaflet, Cooking Beef according to the Cut. Look on page seven and there are the directions and an illustration to show you just how to wrap the bacon around the meat cakes.

Today I am suggesting a new recipe for creamed mixed vegetables. This combination is excellent for occasional variety of flavor in vegetable dishes or to use up small amounts of left-over cooked vegetables or a few left in the bin. Any combination of three or four vegetables can be used. However, it would make our meals monotonous if mixtures of vegetables were used too frequently, and if the delightful characteristic flavor of each vegetable, when cooked and served alone, was lacking.

For creamed mixed vegetables there are eight ingredients. I'll read them if you are ready.

- 1 cup of diced potatoes
- 1 and 1/2 cup of diced carrots
- 1 cup of diced turnips
- 3 cups of finely chopped cabbage
- 2 tablespoons of melted butter
- 2 tablespoons of flour
- 1 cup of milk
- 1 and 1/2 teaspoons of salt

Once more, the eight ingredients are: (Repeat)

Cook the potatoes, carrots, and turnips in 3 cups of boiling water until almost tender. Add the cabbage, allowing about 5 minutes for cooking. Prepare a sauce of the melted butter, flour, salt and milk. Cook until thickened and stir this sauce into the vegetables. Cook a few minutes longer until the desired consistency is reached, and then serve.

Scissors are excellent tools for preparing shredded lettuce. Keep a pair hanging in the kitchen and you will find that it comes in handy again and again at salad-making time. The leaves at the outside of the head can be used for shredded lettuce--those that are too large to be attractive if left whole, or those that have withered or imperfect edges that need trimming off.

The recipe for chocolate cornstarch pudding is on page 57 of your green cook book.

Tomorrow: Odd Jobs for February.

